THE EXPEDITION AGAINST *ROCHEFORT*

Fully STATED and CONSIDERED.

IN A

LETTER

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE the

AUTHOR

OF THE

CANDID REFLEXIONS

ON THE

REPORT

OF THE

GENERAL OFFICERS, &c.

By a COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

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BRUN

A

LETTER, &c.

SIR.

YOU may, perhaps, be a little surpriſed at receiving a Letter from me: Perſons of my Deſcription are not eaſily found in the Circle of your Acquaintance, and you will be puzzled to gueſs my Name; but no Matter what is my Name, or what my Acquaintance with you: I might as well aſk who that Friend in the Country was to whom you have thought fit to addreſs your Letter. I have lived a good many Years among thoſe who are called Country Gentlemen, and never found that you had a ſingle Friend among them; they knew you too well: Let us ceaſe therefore to enquire who was your Correſpondent, either when you

wrote your own, or when you receive this Letter. We both have our Reaſon for the manner of Addreſs.

You will wonder, perhaps, by what Means I have traced this Performance Home to you. Whatever I am, I claim no Title, I form no Pretenſions to ſuperior Sagacity, or to a more extenſive Intelligence, than others who bear the ſame Character, which I, perhaps, aſſume; but the Tree is known by its Fruits, and the Piece often betrays the Workman. Whether the Performance is of the Hand of the great Maſter himſelf, or whether it has only been ſketched out by him, and work'd up by ſome inferiour Artiſt, I am not Connoiſſeur enough to determine, but I know the School. The World was enriched laſt Winter with ſo many *Teſts* and ſo many other curious Pieces in the ſame Taſte, that it is impoſſible not to find out the Hands: To you therefore I addreſs myſelf, as to the great Fountain and Source, without conſidering whether you have conveyed your Poiſon through your own maſterly Pen, or transfuſed it into the Quill of ſome leſs noble, tho' ſtill perhaps truly noble, Diſciple.

Your Appearance on this Occaſion juſtifies the Advice you give to your Friend in the 43d

Page

Page of your great Work. *Imagine ſpecifically what is moſt agreeable to common Senſe, and then do not be ſurpriſed at finding the Event diametrically oppoſite to it.* In the Name of that Common Senſe, what have you, or any of your Faction, to do, in being the Partizans of thoſe Perſons who are the Objects of that Report, whoſe Unpopularity might, for a Time perhaps, have eclipſed even yours, *unleſs* you were originally a Party in their Offence, and from thence are become bound to be a Party in their Juſtification. Thoſe who think you have a Right to the Attribute of Common Senſe, muſt be perſuaded that you are involved in this unfortunate Deſcription. Mankind, indeed, had heard of the extraordinary Aſſiduity with which you attended the General in C——f, from the Moment of his Return, to that of his Trial; and that you was employed in the arduous Buſineſs of drawing up his Defence: Yet they were diſpoſed to hope, that this proceeded only from the Warmth of Friendſhip, and if your Diſcretion ſuffered in the Opinions of the over-prudent, you was recompenſed by the Honour which was reflected on your Humanity. Why then would you not ſuffer it to reſt on a Foundation ſo advantagious to you? Why would you confirm the Imputations which Mankind, had with too much Appearance of Plauſibility,

thrown

thrown out upon you, that you and *yours* were the real Authors of that diſgraceful Diſappointment which the Nation ſo deeply feels and reſents, and that the Generals who have hitherto born the Infamy, were but the Puppets which you and *yours* have actuated.

You ſay, Page the 29th. " The Unpro-
" miſingneſs of this Expedition was not
" judged of only by the Event, but Numbers
" here, on knowing its Deſtination for the
" Coaſt of *France*, and the Conſtitution of
" Things in thoſe Parts, made even no Merit
" of *pronouncing boldly*, that *nothing would*, or
" could be done by that grand Armada."
Once more in the Name of Common Senſe, why do you, of all Men living, bring this Circumſtance back to People's Memory. It was well obſerved at the Time, and did not paſs without the natural Comment, that a certain Sett of Men, not famous for their extenſive Knowledge, did, even long before the Squadron ſailed, declare publickly, that *whereſoever* was its Deſtination, *nothing would* be done by it. Mankind were aſtoniſhed at the *Boldneſs* with which this was pronounced. They proceeded ſo far as to draw from this *Boldneſs* a very ill Omen of the Succeſs. They went ſtill farther; for to this were entirely owing

ing thoſe Sulpicions, or as you ſay Page 9th, "thoſe treaſonable Inſinuations, that a Tenderneſs for *H—n—r* might occaſion an "Armament to be ſent out with Intimations, "properly given, that nothing being done "would not be the moſt diſpleaſing Thing "imaginable." They obſerved, that the Perſons who thus *pronounced* with ſo much *Boldneſs*, were the ſame, who, by their private Intrigues and Cabals, had a few Months before thrown the Affairs of the King and Kingdom into ſo much Confuſion; and it ſeemed no great Refinement in Politicks to ſuppoſe, that the ſame Influence which enabled them then to put a Stop to all Publick Buſineſs, might ſtill ſubſiſt to ſuch a Degree, as would blaſt the Expedition; for they knew very well, as you ſay, Page 7th, "The Envy of "ſome, who oppoſed the preſent Miniſter's "Riſe to Power, would be carried to ſuch "treaſonable Lengths, as ſecretly to thwart "and countermine his Operations." Has the Event proved that they were miſtaken in this Apprehenſion? Or will this Book of yours prove it?

You tell us, Page the 21ſt, "That his "Royal Highneſs the Duke greatly deſired "and preſſed this Meaſure, in Hopes of its "making a powerful Diverſion;" and you refer

refer us as for a Voucher to the *Enq.* Page 20." I have read that Page in the *Enquiry* again and again, and I find nothing to warrant ſuch an Aſſertion; I ſee, indeed, in that Page, that Sir *J. Ligonier* informs the Commander in chief of the Land Forces, what was one Point in the King's View in this Meaſure, "that it was to create a Diverſion in Favour "of his R. H. and the K. of *Pruſſia*, and "that the K. of *Pruſſia* deſired and preſſed "this *very* Meaſure:" But I find no Intimation that it was the Duke's Deſire. I find no Reaſon to ſuppoſe that the Plan had been communicated to him, or approved by him, much leſs recommended or preſſed by him for Execution. I moſt heartily wiſh it had; for however widely you and I might differ in our Reaſons, we ſhall both agree in one Concluſion, That a Plan approved and recommended by his R. H. would not have ſo ſhamefully failed without any Attempt to execute it.

You tell us, Page 7, that on the Return of the Fleet, "*Some merely guided by private* "*Attachments*, or Prejudices in Favour of "the Projectors, or at leaſt the principal "Promoter of the Attempt, extolled it to "the Skies, and that on the other hand "others, *perhaps*, influenced by Conſidera-

tions

" tions of the like private Nature, by Pique,
" Prejudice, or Envy, treated the whole
" Plan as chimerical, crude, indigeſted, both
" in the Projection and Appointment of the
" Execution, from which no better, or other
" Succeſs, could be expected than what befel
" it. That *the whole of it* was the Scheme of
" a Man who wanted to value himſelf up-
" on what he did not underſtand, and who,
" rather than do nothing, would do ſome-
" thing which was worſe than nothing."
One ſhould have ſuppoſed that an Author of *Candid Reflexions* would at leaſt have taken Care to ſteer between theſe two partial Opinions, which you yourſelf repreſent as the Extreme on either Side. And yet there is not a Line in your whole candid Performance, which does not tend to ſupport this Virulence againſt the Miniſter.

But tho' you have undertaken to attack, I ſhall not undertake to defend him: I am not commiſſioned to it: I am not ſufficiently appriſed of thoſe Facts which juſtify the Plan of the Expedition; but what I undertake to prove is, that you have no Facts, or at leaſt you produce none, on which it ought to be condemned. Prejudiced, doubtleſs, I am, and Prejudice will inſinuate itſelf into the Mind of every Diſputant, and every Reader. You think, for Inſtance, not

only that the Generals who commanded the Expedition are to be juſtified *in having done no more*, but that they are in ſome Degree blameable *for having done ſo much*, for the Plan was wild, chimerical, and abſurd. You are ſatisfied from the Reputation of the Generals, that if the Fault had not lain in the Plan, there could have been no Failure in the Execution. I, on my Part, am perſuaded that a Plan (no Matter who projected it) approved on the utmoſt Deliberation by His Majeſty, and unanimouſly approved by his Privy-Council, undertaken on a full Examination of Facts, by theſe very Generals, without Proteſt or Remonſtrance, approved and deſired by the King of *Pruſſia* (for the King of *Pruſſia*, we find, *Enq.* p. 20, deſires and preſſes this very Meaſure) and prepared under the immediate Inſpection of Sir *John Ligonier*, then, as well as now, Commander in Chief of the King's Forces, could not be a Project ſo totally repugnant to Common Senſe, as you chuſe to repreſent it. Theſe, indeed, are Names which make a different Impreſſion on you and me. Your Opinion of his ****, or at leaſt your Repreſentation of him, is perhaps apt to vary with Circumſtances. When he ſubmits to be directed by you and yours, he is every Thing that is great and noble: But if he diſpleaſes you or yours, we need go

no

no farther for your Sentiments than to that famous Manuſcript, which has been, ſo buſily, and yet ſo cautiouſly handed about, wherein he is repreſented as deceiving the whole World, expoſing his favourite Son, as betraying the Safety of his E——l Territories, the Poſſeſſions of his Subjects, the Honour of his Arms, his Family, and his Name, for the Sake of preſerving his private Treaſures, and avoiding the Expence of an Army neceſſary for the Defence of his Country, which he ſo often and ſo ſolemnly had declared was an effective Army, and yet in Fact never ſubſiſted hardly even upon Paper. How falſe this Aſſertion was, ſubſequent Events have proved. As to the King of *Pruſſia* we all know how much his military Skill has been, with great Uniformity, derided by you and your favourite Heroes: A Man wild, impetuous, impracticable, ignorant of the Art of War, and as unqualified to be a General as Mr. *Pitt* is to be a Miniſter. The preſent Commander in Chief of the *Britiſh* Troops we know too, is no Favourite with you and *yours*. The People of this Country have indeed long conſidered him as the firſt Soldier, tho' till lately a very ſubordinate Officer in the Service. They will never forget the Services he has done this Country. *Britiſh* Armies, with their General,

ſaved from inſtant Deſtruction, by his ſuperior Skill in his Profeſſion, by his Capacity to ſee, and his Readineſs and Alertneſs to ſeize an Advantage over his Enemy, will ever endear him to the Friends of *England*, and the Royal Family. But perhaps this very Merit, which will never be forgot by his grateful Country, will never be forgiven by Individuals.

Page 11th and 12th, your firſt Objection ſeems to be the Conſtitution of the Board of Enquiry. You adopt an Expreſſion, which perhaps you firſt ſuggeſted to the General, *That it was a Proceeding not quite common.* And you ſuggeſt your Doubts about the Legality, as well as Propriety, of ſuch an Enquiry. I will anſwer this fully, at leaſt *ad Hominem.* The firſt Inſtitution of a Board of General Officers for the Purpoſe of enquiring into the Conduct of a Commander, took Place under the Auſpices of his Royal Highneſs *William* Duke of *Cumberland*, at that time Commander in Chief of the *Britiſh* Forces: An Officer was judged, *condemned*, and ruined by that Board of Enquiry, *without any other Trial.* Would you have any other Anſwer to this Objection? Or ſhall I comment upon it? Or make Compariſons? But if ever ſuch an Enquiry was

right

right and proper, it was ſo in the preſent Caſe, where the Parties to be tried had agreed upon a total Suppreſſion of Evidence. In the very Council of War, which unanimouſly reſolved to do nothing, far from a Deſire to ſtate the Evidence on which they proceeded, and their reſpective Opinions upon that Evidence, which one would think natural to every one who was ſollicitous for his Honour and Juſtification, the firſt Thing reſolved on was to take no Minutes of Opinions, and that even the Informations of the Perſons examined ſhould not ſtand Part of the Minutes, ſo as to be *tranſmitted to any Perſon*; *Enq.* p. 10. Here then, as far as in them lay, was a total Suppreſſion of Evidence.

But, ſays one of the Generals, I do not conceive myſelf anſwerable for an Opinion given at a Council of War: Therefore it may be urged why are Minutes of what paſſes there neceſſary? I confeſs I am ſorry to find this Doctrine ſo much received among Officers, that they are not reſponſible for Opinions given at a Council of War, becauſe the Nature of Mankind is too apt to perſuade him, that there can be no Faults where there is not a Poſſibility of Puniſhment. I therefore will never admit this Doctrine in the Extent it is often urged. Criminally re-

reſponſible for his Opinion no Officer can be, becauſe it is not an Offence againſt any Article of War; Bet what then? Is the Opinion, on the Evidence on which it is founded, to be ſuppreſſed? And is not an Officer reſponſible to his King and Country in any other Place than a Court Martial? God forbid that ſuch a Doctrine ſhould be eſtabliſhed.

A Court Martial which judges upon the Letter of the Law, upon the ſtrict Words of Articles of War, or a penal Act of Parliament, may acquit of capital Crimes a Conduct which nevertheleſs evinces the Officers, who have been guilty of it, to be unfit for any future Command. It is the Words of poſitive Laws, which in a free Country are to make Men liable to Puniſhments; but it is the Prerogative of the Crown to judge, upon the whole of the Circumſtances, who are fit to continue in its Service, and to command its Armies.

But you are not ſatisfied with the Perſonages appointed to form this Board, and in an Ironic Paragraph, Page 11, you inſinuate how unfit they were to judge of ſuch a Matter, by telling us what Qualifications were neceſſary to ſuch Judges. Before I conſider their Qua-

Qualifications, let me aſk you a Queſtion, Who do you think appointed them? The King, you will doubtleſs ſay: It was his Prerogative. But who do you think recommended them? I aſk this of you, becauſe I am perſuaded *your Intelligence on this Head* is better than mine. But I will tell you who, I verily believe, did not recommend them. I believe Mr. *Pitt* did not; and the World, when they read thoſe reſpectable Names, will not be of Opinion, that, conſidering the known and declared Friendſhips, Connections and Attachments of the *Majority of them*, they were preciſely *the three Men* on whoſe Deciſion Mr. *Pitt* would willingly reſt a Point, which many of his Enemies, and you at the Head of them, endeavoured to make a Point, on which his Capacity as a Miniſter was to be determined. Whatever Qualties they had, or had not, to fit them for the Judges in ſuch an Enquiry, they certainly had no Partiality in Favour of the Projectors of, and againſt thoſe who ought to have executed the Plan of the Expedition. As to their Capacity and Knowledge of Service, when I conſider and contemplate the glorious Liſt of Heroes, to whoſe Command the Army of this Country has been for ſo many Years confided, I confeſs myſelf at a Loſs, thro' the infinite Variety of Choice, to

point

point out the Perſons whoſe conſummate Knowledge might give the greateſt Weight to their Deciſion : yet I ſay, and I ſay it ſeriouſly, that if Experience, ſuch as the Armies of this Country can give, founded upon ſtrong manly Senſe, an active Spirit, and a penetrating Sagacity, can qualify a Man to judge in a Queſtion of this Sort, it was to be found among thoſe who ſat at this Board of Enquiry.

Before I proceed to conſider the Conduct of the Generals, *&c.* I ſhall follow you in ſome of your previous Steps, tho' they are not Steps in which I delight to walk. In order to form a Judgment on the Practicability of the Meaſure, you are ſenſible a Queſtion will occur to every Man ; What was the Force which our Troops were likely to meet at, and after their Deſcent ? To make this favourable to your Point, you are pleaſed to avail yourſelf, p. 13, 14, of Accounts, which you think fit to inform us were circulated in *Holland*, and other neutral Countries, of the State of the Troops of *France*, which were ſaid to amount to 300,000. The Memorial delivered in by Authority makes them ſomething leſs than 200,000. You ſay you don't diſpute the Truth of this Account, but you inſinuate the general Opinion to be, that they are above 300,000 Regulars.

lars: But the military Lists of *France*, you say, are open, and it would be unpardonable not to have a thorough Knowledge of that Point. But pray, Sir, how is one to attain that thorough Knowledge? Do you expect a Certificate from the Muster-Master-General of *France*, (if there be such an Officer) or what other Information do you demand? The best that can be obtained, unless from immediate Authority of the King of *France*, (and perhaps the best, even without that Exception) is what the Privy Council had before them. Look into the Memorial. Can you have a more exact Account, than the very Corps of which the Army consists; their Numbers in Time of Peace; their different Augmentations since the War commenced, and their present Destination? How does it appear that the Memorial is not taken from those very military Lists to which you appeal? But the Point was too strong against you to be suffered to remain in full Force, and therefore you endeavour to contradict particular Accounts, delivered by Authority, by vague Reports, which you are pleased to say were current in other Countries. How such Reports came to your Ears I cannot imagine! I believe you are the first Man of Business who ever attempted to pass such a Report on the World. But that you may make as free with my Intelligence as

I have done with yours, I will tell you a Report which I have heard, and I fancy from rather better Authority than your *Dutch* Report. That ſo far were the *French* from having the Troops on the Coaſt which you inſinuate, and which I think, if all collected together, as in your different Accounts, would amount to about 100,000 Regulars, beſides 100,000 Militia, there were actually but 4000 regular Troops at the Time our Fleet came upon the Coaſt, for the Defence of all the Garriſons and Outworks in and near *Port l' Orient*, *la Rochelle*, and *Rochefort*, and that the ſmaller Diviſion of theſe was at *Rochefort*. I will now communicate another Report; You, as well as the Generals, ſeem to ſtand in great Awe of a Name ſo dignified as a Marſhal of *France*. You ſpeak, in different Places, of the Alertneſs of the Enemy on this Occaſion, and the proportionable Reſiſtance which our Troops muſt undoubtedly have met with if they attempted to land. Yet what was the real Caſe: The old Marſhal, worn out with Infirmities, *ne faiſoit que pleurer*. Such were the Accounts the *French* themſelves gave of him. He conſidered all as loſt, the Moment the Attack was pointed at *Rochfort*, and far from making Diſpoſitions to diſpute the landing, he paſſed the Hours in Tears, and in writing Expreſſes to his Court.

Page 17. You pretend not fully to underſtand the Meaning of the Term *Coup de Main*. You attempt Definitions of it; from its vague and uncertain Import you would inſinuate that it was hardly underſtood by our Generals what they were to do, but you argue as if by a *Coup de Main*, was meant, only a Surpriſe, and that if the Opportunity of a Surpriſe was loſt, the whole Proſpect of Succeſs was over. I ſhall enter into no Scholaſtick Diſpute about the Definitions of Terms. I will only ſay, that it is very apparent, that the Term *Coup de Main* was not uſed to expreſs the taking *Rochfort* by *Surpriſe only*, but that it was to be attacked in every other Way, except the opening Trenches, and erecting Batteries.

In the Advice delivered by Sir *John Ligonier*, whoſe Experience in the Art of War, Sir *J. Mordaunt* ſays, will vindicate any Officer guided by his Authority, I find this Paragraph, *Enq.* p. 22. "As for a *Coup* "*de Main*, it may perhaps ſucceed *beſt* at "your coming up, as the Enemy may be "in a great Hurry, Surprize, and Conſter-"nation, at ſuch an unexpected Viſit, and "not have Time to make his Diſpoſitions. "But if that is not thought proper, it may "*ſucceed as well after the Place has been tho-*"*roughly reconnoitred*, and you have fixed the "Spots where you deſign to make the greateſt

" Efforts, and if the Enemy ſee any Prepa-
" rations for a regular Attack, they will leſs
" expect a *Coup de Main*. *Bergen-op-Zoom* was
" taken by a *Coup de Main*, after a long Siege.
" St. *Philip*'s was taken by Scaling-Ladders,
" and a *Coup de Main*, tho' the Garriſon was
" 3000 ſtrong, after a Siege of 56 Days:
" The Neceſſity of dividing a ſmall Garriſon
" in a Place of ſuch Circumference as *Roche-*
" *fort* may facilitate the Succeſs of a bold
" Attempt." If Sir *John Mordaunt* really thought Sir *J. Ligonier* to be a Man of that Experience in the Art of War which he deſcribes him to be; if he really meant to guide himſelf by the whole of his Advice in the Execution of the Plan, and not to excuſe himſelf, only by ſelecting certain Parts of it from others which were explanatory, and with which they were connected, how come he ſo totally to have forgot this Part of it, which, if any Doubt had ſubſiſted, would have explained what was intended by a *Coup de Main*, and to remember only the Recommendation to ſecure a Communication for a Retreat? nay of what Sort was that Communication to be? See the ſame Paper, *Enq.* p. 21. " Sup-
" poſing the Troops landed, it muſt be left
" to the Conſideration of the Generals whe-
" ther they ſhould not march with proper
" Precautions *directly* to *Rochefort*, to pre-
" vent

" vent any Succours being thrown into the " Place, at the ſame Time that the Marines " ſhould be employed for making a good In- " trenchment for the Security of the Stores " to be landed from time to time, as well as " of a Retreat in caſe of Neceſſity." Here then vaniſhes at once all that Part of your Argument, and of the General's Defence, which is founded upon the Plan of Attack, being intended to take the Place only by Surprize. Here vaniſhes all the Weight which was to be derived from the Advice of Sir *J. Ligonier*, with regard to the Neceſſity of Fort *Fouras* being *taken before the Troops were landed*, in order to ſecure a Retreat. Sir *J. Ligonier* ſuppoſes the Troops firſt to land, and then to throw up an Intrenchment, in order to ſecure a Retreat, and to receive and preſerve the Stores as they were landed.

Another Argument, which you endeavour to force into your Service, is the Countenance given by the Concurrence of the Sea-Officers, to the Opinion of that Council of War which determined to do nothing againſt *Rochefort*. Let us ſee what Sir *Edward Hawke* ſays on the Subject: In his Letter to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, *Enq.* p. 101, are theſe Words: " We " (meaning the Seamen) aſſented to the Rea- " ſons for not attempting to take *Rochefort*

by

" by Eſcalade, in Confidence of *their* (mean-
" ing the Land Officers) Judgment and Know-
" ledge in *their own* Profeſſion; *but I and*
" *every one elſe agreed in Opinion, that the Land-*
" *ing could be effected.*" What therefore is the Inference to be drawn from hence, but this: The Seamen were perſuaded they could effect the whole of their Duty; they could land the Troops: As to what the Troops could do when landed, it was not their Province to judge: It was the Buſineſs of the Generals to determine; and they ſigned their Names to the Council of War, not in Teſtimony of their own Opinion, but in Deference to the Opinion of thoſe whoſe Province it was to judge and determine. That is, they acted conſiſtently with the King's Inſtructions, to live in Harmony with the Land Officers, and not to give Occaſion of Diſcontent, by intermeddling, proteſting, and remonſtrating in what was not their Province; but ſo weary does Sir *Edward Hawke* appear to have been of theſe Councils of War, that when Sir *J. Mordaunt* applied to him, to call one, to conſider of the Return of the Fleet, Sir *Edward* refuſed, alledging that the Seamen had nothing to do with it; it was a Land Operation only. *Enq.* p. 35.

You

You are pleaſed to object to the Teſtimony and Opinion of Colonel *Clerk* as deſerving leſs Weight, becauſe it was upon his Repreſentation that the Attempt on *Rochfort* was firſt thought of; and he, you think, is bound in Honour to ſupport the Practicability, that is, the Honour of his own Plan: But you think, at the ſame Time, that the higheſt Credit is to be given to the very Names of the Officers of which the Council of War was compoſed, forgetting that they are the very Parties to be tried, and that their Teſtimony is brought forth for their own Condemnation or Acquittal.

I have thus endeavoured to demoliſh that Outwork of Prejudice with which you have endeavoured to intrench yourſelf: So far goes the *Coup de Main*, and now if you pleaſe we will begin the Attack in Form.

The Report of the Board of General Officers, which was the Ground-work of your Letter, muſt likewiſe be ſo of mine. You have concluded, and I will begin with it; for the Plan of that Report will give a Regularity to our Arguments; and as that has conſidered every Part of the Conduct of the Generals, it will bring on all that can be urged for

or

or againſt them from the Evidence hitherto made public in a regular Method.

The firſt Article of the Report is, "It "appears that one Cauſe of the Expedi- "tion having failed, is the not attacking "*Fort Fouras* by Sea, at the ſame Time that "it would have been attacked by Land "agreeable to the firſt Deſign, which cer- "tainly muſt have been of the greateſt Uti- "lity towards carrying your Majeſty's Inſtruc- "tions into Execution; It was at firſt re- "ſolved by Sir *Edward Hawke* (*Thierry* the "Pilot of the *Magnanime* having undertaken "the ſafe Conduct of a Ship to *Fort Fouras* "for that Purpoſe) but afterwards *laid aſide* "*upon the Repreſentation of Vice Admiral* "Knowles, that the *Barfleur*, the Ship de- "ſigned for that Service, was on Ground at "the Diſtance of between Four or Five "Miles from the Shore, but as neither Sir "*Edward Hawke* nor the Pilot could attend "to give any Information upon that Head, "we cannot preſume to offer a certain Opi- "nion thereupon."

This is the Firſt Article of the Report, which, after having told us, p. 37. that it is a moſt admirable Piece, calculated, as if by Compromiſe, neither to acquit or condemn,

you

you tell us, p. 38. ſhews that at leaſt ſo far the Commanders are in no Fault. If they are in no Fault they are acquitted, and I am ready to allow, that ſo far as this Article goes, the Commanders of the Land Forces are acquitted; but if you will argue farther, that all the Commanders who were to conduct the Expedition were in no Fault, eſpecially if you inſiſt as you do, p. 38. "that it appears plain, that *Fouras* was inacceſſible to Shipping, notwithſtanding the Pilot *Thierry*'s Promiſe, which it ſhould ſeem he could not make good, I totally deny your Concluſion." A Child in Argument muſt ſee the Fallacy of it. If the Fact was clear that *Fouras* was inacceſſible to Shipping, how comes it to paſs that the not attacking it is given as a Cauſe of the Failure of the Expedition. No poſitive Opinion was given you ſay upon it. Why was it not, and where was the Neceſſity of leaving this Point open for farther Enquiry after the Return of Sir *Edward Hawke* and the Pilot, if it already appeared to be a Meaſure impracticable? But *impracticable* is the Word, and every Thing is to be, from beginning to end, pronounced impracticable. I ſay that it appears to be far from certain, that *Fort Fouras* was inacceſſible to Shipping, and yet the Board of Officers did right to give no Opinion, becauſe Sir *Edward Hawke* and *Thierry*, Par-

ties principally concerned, had not been heard. I will enter farther into the Conſideration of this Matter, for ſome Concluſion may be drawn from it; it is a Thing ſo aſtoniſhing, that (as you ſay) *a Sett of Gentlemen, of untainted Character, and truſted with the Arms of their Country, could be ſo groſsly wanting to its Honour and their own, as to return back with ſo bad a Grace*, that it behoves us to throw all the Light on this Tranſaction, which any Circumſtance can produce, even though the Land Officers are not concerned in the Event. But whoever is to blame, the Nation is concerned in the Event; for they bear the Loſs and the Infamy of the Miſcarriage.

It appears from the Evidence of Vice Ad. *Knowles*, *Enq.* p. 44. that the whole Affair of this Attack upon *Fouras* was delegated by Sir *Edward Hawke* to his Inſpection, and that Sir *Edward* had proceeded ſo far in the Execution of the Plan, as to direct his Secretary to begin an Order to lighten the *Barfleur* for that Purpoſe. But this was laid aſide, upon the Remonſtrances of Capt. *Graves* and Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, that the *Barfleur* was aground at between Four and Five Miles Diſtance from the Shore; that then Sir *Edward Hawke* ordered him to try to carry the Bomb-ketches in, which he did, and run them

them aground at more than Two Miles and Two Thirds of a Mile Diſtance from *Fort Fouras*, where they were likely to have been taken by Row-Boats: That then he run the *Coventry* Frigate a-ground Five Times within the Hour, at a greater Diſtance from the Shore than the Bomb-ketch. That *then* (and it ſeems not till then) *he ſent his Maſter to ſound*, and found that at *Two Miles* Diſtance from the Fort, there was but Six Foot Water at High Water. All theſe notable Exploits were performed by Vice-Admiral *Knowles*; the ſame, who, it is ſaid, adviſed Sir *Edward Hawke* not even to enter the Road of *Baſque*, leſt he ſhould be bombarded; the ſame, one has formerly heard and read of in Courts-Martial; the ſame, who on a late P———y Enquiry, had the Happineſs to boaſt ſuch peculiar Protection and Countenance from you, Sir; the ſame, who (as I have heard) detained the Squadron Two Days in Sight of the *French* Coaſt, becauſe he had ſent away the Pilot, deſtined to conduct it upon a Chace after a *French* Ship. But I will not recapitulate his Virtues or his Merit. It was upon the Remonſtrance of *this* Vice-Admiral, whoſe Station in Command entitled him, at leaſt, to ſo much Confidence from his ſuperior Officer, that the Reſolution to attack

Fort Fouras by Sea was laid aſide. Now, then, let me relate to you the Reaſons which induce me to believe, that notwithſtanding this Report of Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, *Fort Fouras* was acceſſible by Sea, tho' the Vice-Admiral had not *the good Fortune* to find out the Channel.

In the firſt Place, then, tho' I have by no Means that high Opinion of the *French* Wiſdom and Abillity which you entertain, and on every Occaſion extol ſo highly; yet I do ſuppoſe, that in Matters of Defence, they do conduct themſelves on Principles ſimilar to thoſe which are adopted by the reſt of Mankind. I do ſuppoſe, for Inſtance, that when they build a Fort, it is intended either to defend or offend. *Fouras* was weak to the Land; it ſtood at the Water's Edge to guard the Channel; it ſtood even on a Bank which ran into the Water; and as Col. *Wolfe*, who ſeems to be the firſt Officer who thought of reconnoitring it, tells us, *Enq.* p. 30, It had 24 Embraſures to the Water Side. What was the Uſe of this Fort? Was it to guard a Bank of Sand over which ſcarce a *Thames* Wherry could paſs? If the Guns of no Ship whatever could reach the Fort, could the Guns of the Fort reach any Ship? According to Mr. *Knowles*, there was no Chan-

nel

nel at all, or it lay out of Gunſhot of the Fort. At two Miles Diſtance the Vice-Admiral's Maſter found but ſix Feet Water at High-Water; at near three Miles Diſtance the Bomb-Ketch, which drew but eleven Foot Water, went aground. The *Coventry* Frigate did the ſame further out than that, and the *Barfleur* at a ſtill greater Diſtance. Now, tho' *after* all this Delay, and Hazard to the Ships, that Admiral thought fit to ſound, and try the Depth of the Water *at a Diſtance from the Fort, where no Cannon could reach*; yet it is aſtoniſhing to find not a ſingle Proof attempted to be given of the Depth of the Water near the Shore, and within Gunſhot of the Fort. Is it impoſſible then that the Channel, a narrow one, might run in Shore? Is it not demonſtrable that it did ſo, both from the Circumſtance of the Thing, and the Evidence of thoſe who knew, and had navigated it? What ſays *Bonneau*, the Fiſherman, examined by General *Conway*, and others, *Enq.* p. 53, There were four Fathom (24 Foot) Water at half Cannon-ſhot from Fort *Fouras*, a Depth ſufficient for a 60 Gun Ship. Now, tho' the Land Officers did not chuſe to truſt to the Intelligence of a Fiſherman for the State of the Fortifications at *Rochfort*, yet it ſeems to be the beſt Evi-

dence

dence as to the Depth of the Channel that could have been wiſhed. There was the united Teſtimony of *Thierry* and *Bonneau*, joined to the Reaſon of the Thing, that there muſt be a Channel within Gunſhot of the Fort, though the Ships miſſed the Entrance of it. I might add, that tho' the Vice-Admiral could not conduct a Ship to the Fort, there were Captains in the Fleet who it ſeems offered it: Capt. *Colby* offered to carry the *Princeſs Amelia*. *Enq.* p. 30. How then can we unriddle this Myſtery, for a Myſtery there certainly is? Perhaps it is eaſier to gueſs the Solution than to explain it.

From all theſe Circumſtances, I ſay it is clear that *Fouras* muſt be, and was acceſſible by Sea; That the Board of Officers are therefore juſtified in the Report, that the not attacking it by Sea appeared to be one of the Cauſes of the Failure of the Expedition. I have ſaid this merely to juſtify the Report of the Board; for the Conduct of the Generals ſeems to me ſo little affected by this Article, and indeed, ſo totally independant of it, that from this Moment, if you chuſe it, I will ſuppoſe that *Fouras* was built only to guard a Sand-

Bank,

Bank, and that it was inacceſſible to every Thing but a Long Boat.

The next Article in the Report is, "That "another Cauſe of the Failure of the Expe- "dition was, that inſtead of attempting to "land when the Report was received on the "24th of *September* from Rear-Admiral *Bro-* "*derick*, and the Captains who had been ſent "out to ſound and reconnoitre, a Council "of War was ſummoned, and held on the "25th, in which it was unanimouſly re- "ſolved not to land, as the Attempt upon "*Rochfort* was neither adviſeable or practica- "ble. But it does not appear to us that "there were then, or at any Time afterwards, "either a Body of Troops, or Batteries on "Shore, ſufficient to have prevented the at- "tempting a Deſcent, in Purſuance of the "Inſtructions ſigned by Your Majeſty. "Neither does it appear to us, that there were "any ſufficient Reaſons to induce the Council "of War to believe, that *Rochfort* was ſo far "changed in reſpect to its Strength, or Poſ- "ture of Defence ſince the Expedition was "reſolved on in *England*, as to prevent all "Attempts from an Attack upon the Place, "in order to burn and deſtroy the Docks, "Magazines, Arſenals, and Shipping, in "Obedience to Your Majeſty's Command."

Is

Is this, Sir, the Part of the Report, which you ſay is ſo far from carrying Cenſure, that the Commanders (I mean the Land Commanders) might even glory in avowing and ſubſcribing to it? Is this the Part *which you ſay does Honour to their Senſe and Obedience?* Let us ſtate it in fewer Words: A Cauſe of Failure in this Expedition was, that the Generals, inſtead of landing on the 24th of *September*, when the Report of thoſe ſent to reconnoitre was made, called a Council of War on the 25th, and reſolved not to land. Yet there was no Reaſon which prevented their having landed as they were ordered. Nor do we think the Council of War had any Reaſon to imagine, that the Situation of *Rochefort* appeared now ſo different from what it was repreſented to be when the Expedition was firſt ſet on Foot, as to make it impoſſible to execute their Orders.

If this is Obedience, if this is Matter of Glory to a Soldier, in the Name of Common Senſe, what is Diſobedience; and what can he do to deſerve Shame and Diſhonour? Can it be aſſerted in ſtronger Terms that the Expedition failed, becauſe the Council of War, *without any Reaſon to juſtify ſuch a Reſolution*, determined it to be impracticable and unadviſeable to execute their Orders. If you

ſay

ſay that the Determination does not declare in poſitive and expreſs Terms, that the Expedition was originally prudent and adviſeable, you ſay true: Such a Declaration would have been very unbecoming the Board of Officers to whoſe Conſideration that Queſtion was by no Means referred. They were to conſider whether the Officers had ſufficient Foundation to juſtify the Non-execution of their Orders, and they make the proper Anſwer to ſuch a Queſtion, that from what appears to them, thoſe Officers had not ſuch a ſufficient Foundation as could juſtify them. I dare ſay they took Care to avoid giving their Opinions on more than was referred to them; in ſo doing they ſhewed their Capacity and their Knowledge of their Duty. And yet, notwithſtanding their Care to avoid it, an Approbation of the original Plan is moſt manifeſtly and neceſſarily *implied*, in this Deciſion; for if *Rochefort* was open to attack, no one doubts but it was wiſe to attempt it, yet with all the Changes which the Generals could prove to have been made in its Strength and Poſture of Defence, ſince the Expedition was firſt reſolved on, it did not appear to be even *now* in ſuch a State as to prevent all Attempts of an Attack. Yet no ſuch Attempts were made.

But you ſeem to be ſo intent on condemn-

ing the original Plan, that, like the Council of War, you forgot the Point which ought to be under Conſideration, ſuppoſe the Plan to be as wild as you repreſent it? Are the Officers juſtifiable in their Diſobedience of Orders? By no means. The firſt Duty of a Soldier is Obedience: Obedience not only to the Command of a ſuperior Officer, but to the State who employs him: His Life is not his own, it belongs to the State. Such are the very Terms of his Service; ſuch the Conditions on which he is maintained by the Publick. If he is ordered to an Attack, he is not to aſk whether he can get back, and yet he is to take the beſt Precautions to enable him to get back. It is as much a Part of his Duty to preſerve, as to expoſe himſelf, *provided he performs his Orders.* But is a private Officer, or a Collection of Officers in Council (for the Number does not alter their Condition) to ſay, My Orders are ridiculous, and I will not execute them? Who conſtituted them Counſellors of State, and ſubmitted the Propriety of their Orders to their Deciſion?

This is and muſt be the Caſe where Orders are expreſs and poſitive. Where indeed diſcretionary Orders are given, there ariſes a Latitude and Power of judging. Such was undoubtedly the preſent Caſe. The Generals had

had diſcretionary Orders, but what was the Point to be the Subject of their Diſcretion? Was it whether their original Orders were fit to be executed, ſuppoſing the Caſe to be as repreſented when the Orders were given? Undoubtedly not. It had been before determined by the King, that is by the State, that on the apparent State of *Rochefort* it ought to be attacked. They were therefore to uſe their utmoſt Efforts to land and attack it. But it was left to their Diſcretion to deſiſt, if they found by undoubted Proof, that the Caſe, *as it exiſted*, was become materially changed from what had been *repreſented*. That alone was the Object of their Diſcretion, and therefore the Board of Officers concluded like Men, knowing the Duty of Soldiers, that thoſe who conſtituted the Council of War had failed in theirs, for they deſiſted from the Enterpriſe without ſuch a material Change of Circumſtances appearing. I do not indeed wonder, that on this Occaſion you ſhould have been led into an Error. You are ſo much connected with Soldiers accuſtomed to aſſume the Offices of Stateſmen, that you have been naturally led to confound their Duty.

Let us examine then on what Foundation the Board of Enquiry have grounded this ſe-

vere Cenſure. If *Fouras* could have been attacked by Sea, undoubtedly one or more of the Sea Commanders failed in their Duty. But does it follow, that becauſe the Sea Officers were guilty of a Failure, the Land Officers were juſtified in their immediate Reſolution to go Home again? Undoubtedly not. Was *Fouras* ſo abſolutely neceſſary, that without an Attack upon it from the Sea, it was impoſſible to land, and did it, *upon full Enquiry*, appear impracticable to take it by Land without the Aſſiſtance of Sea Operations? Neither of theſe Juſtifications can the Council of War boaſt. The Admirals and Captains report Two fit landing Places independant of *Fouras*. *Enq.* p. 15. And as to the taking that Fort by Land without a Sea Operation, it does not appear ſo much as to have entered into the Heads of any of the Council, even to order it to be reconnoitred with a View of taking it, and making it a Place of Retreat, tho' all the Generals concur that the principal Objection to the Attack at *Rochfort* was the Want of a Place of Retreat; and Sir *John Mordaunt* declares, *Enq.* p. 28. That had *Fort Fouras* been taken, *there would have been great Eaſe in the Reſt of the Enterpriſe*; ſurely then it was the higheſt Imputation on the Council of War, never to have conſidered this Point, *till after they had determined* to lay

aſide

aſide the only Meaſure which made the Fort worth attacking.

But to go Step by Step, let us conſider the Difficulties which prevented the Attempt to land. Sir *Edward Hawke*, in his Letter to Mr. *Pitt*, *Enq.* p. 101, ſays, *He, and every one elſe, were of Opinion, the Landing might be effected.* The Admiral, and reconnoitring Captains, report, *Enq.* p. 102. Two convenient landing Places, where the Tranſports might come within a Mile and an Half of the Shore, and where no Batteries on the Shore could annoy the landing. Admiral *Broderick* ſays, *Enq* p. 45. that the landing was ſo good, "that he could have got out of the Boats without wetting his Shoes." That no Shot from any Battery could reach the Boats. That Men of War could come within Two Miles. That the Sand Hills were Forty Yards diſtant from High Water Mark. That the Bomb-Ketches, if they could come near enough, might have been uſeful to annoy any Troops hid behind the Sand Hills, and p. 44, Admiral *Knowles* ſays, a Bomb, at an Elevation of 45 Degrees, will go 2 Miles and two Thirds."

This Account of the Landing-places in *Chatelaillon Bay*, is not controverted by the General in Chief, or any of the reſt of the

Council

Council of War. But the Objections they raiſe are of two ſorts. " Numbers of Troops hid behind the Sand-hills, which might cut off the Parties as faſt as they landed: A Difficulty of getting back again to the Ships even when landed, as it was clear from the Evidence of diſcreet and experienc'd Pilots, that if the Wind blew weſterly from the Bay, as there was great Reaſon to expect it would at that Seaſon, Boats could not come or go to the Ships even for many Weeks together:" As to the Troops hid behind the Sand-hills, let us ſee what Evidence there was of any Number collected for ſuch a Purpoſe.

In the firſt Place I muſt beg Leave to inſiſt, that it became the Generals to give Credit to the Intelligence which they received from the Government, and upon which the Plan of the Expedition was undertaken, till they had ſufficient Authority *either from what they ſaw*, or from *credible and poſitive Information* to doubt or disbelieve the Truth of it. Such Facts and Intelligence as they could obtain, they were to believe in Proportion to the Credibility of it, but they were not in Contradiction to the poſitive Intelligence communicated to them by the Government, to act upon their own Reaſoning, as General *Conway* tells you he did, *Enq.* p. 36. that

that tho' *he knew of no conſiderable Army* in the Field, yet he was *perſuaded there muſt be* a conſiderable Number of Men in *Rochfort*. The poſitive Intelligence communicated by the Government informed them, that there were in Fact but 10,000 regular Troops to guard a moſt immenſe Tract of Coaſt, furniſhed with Forts and Fortifications, in each of which there muſt have been ſome proportion of regular Troops. A great Number of theſe were doubtleſs at *Breſt*. Sir *J. Mordaunt* in his Defence, *Enq.* p. 13, 14. ſays he had Intelligence of above 7000 there. And his Reaſoning goes no farther than to ſay, *Enq.* p. 17, That what ſeemed *Certain* on the whole was, that tho' it was *Poſſible* there might be no Army aſſembled to engage them in the Field, it was highly *Improbable* there was not *a good Garriſon* in *Rochfort*. Allow for the preſent that there was; would the Governor of it have deſerted his Works and marched into the open Field with a Complement of Troops amounting only to *a good Garriſon*. Troops were to be left within the Walls; there muſt be more in Fort *la Pointe*, more in Fort *Fouras*, and ſo extenſive were the Works at *Rochefort* and *Rochelle*, and the Forts dependent on them, all of which were liable to be attacked, that if the whole 10,000 Men, which guarded ſuch a length of Coaſt,

had

had been aſſembled in thoſe two Places, it would have been impoſſible to have ſpared ſuch a Number as could have marched to the Coaſt to give a ſerious Oppoſition to the Landing. As to the poſitive Intelligence of Troops aſſembled, let us ſee what it amounts to. Admiral *Broderick* ſaw an Army *in the Field*, *Enq.* p. 45, amounting to 400 or 500 Foot and 150 Horſe. General *Conway* ſays, *Enq.* p. 36, that one Priſoner had ſaid there were eleven Battalions, and another ſeven, but not in the Field but at *Rochelle*; and tho' he paid little Regard to them ſingly, yet on the whole, he thought there was no room to doubt but there were *ſome Troops*; *Enq.* p. 31. Captain *Skinner*, of the *Viper* Sloop, told Colonel *Howard* that on *Sunday* or *Monday* he ſaw a conſiderable Number of Troops, and that he reckoned eight or nine Pair of Colours *. But whether they were regular Troops, or Troops of the Country, he could not tell. *Enq.* p. 32. And I think Sir *J. Mordaunt* ſays, that the Priſoners declared there were Troops, *and even named Regiments*. *Enq.* p. 17.

What

* There are three Standards to each Battalio n, and a *French* Battalion is generally computed at 500 Men.

What is there in this Sum Total of Evidence on this Point, to vary the Intelligence given to the Generals before they ſailed. They were told there were *ſome* Troops, Regiments, and even Battalions; but what credible Evidence was there to induce them to ſuppoſe they were too numerous for the Troops on board the Fleet to cope with?

But how could our Troops have been landed? In the firſt Place Admiral *Knowles*, in Concurrence with the Admiral and Captains who went to reconnoitre, "had *aſſured* "*them there were two Landing-Places out of* "*the Reach of any Battery*; That the Beach "was dry, ſandy, and firm, and the Soldier "need not have wetted his Shoes in getting "out of the Boat; that the Men of War, "[which drew from 20 to 30 Foot Water] "might have come within two Miles; and "tho' the Cannon from them could not an-"noy the Troops, if there were any behind "the Sand-Hills, yet the Bomb-Ketches "might, which throw a Bomb two Miles and "two Thirds; and which, as they drew but "eleven Feet Water, might have come (pro-"bably) as near as the Tranſports." So that the Men might have landed under Cover of the Bombs, which, as the Sand-Hills were but forty Yards from the Water Edge, muſt

have cleared the Ground for conſiderably more than a Mile beyond the Sand-Hills.

As to the Number of Troops that could have landed at a Time, it ſeems aſtoniſhing that this ſhould never have been conſidered by the Generals, I may ſay, till they wanted an Excuſe to come home again. For Col. *Wolfe* depoſes, *Enq.* p. 21. That he believes there never was an exact Calculation made how many could have embarked at a Time in the Boats: What a noble Foreſight in the Generals! He thinks, however, that thirty-ſix Companies of 60 Men, with their Officers, might have embarked at a Time; in all above Two Thouſand and Two Hundred. And how long would it have been before theſe could have been ſupported by ſuch another Body? Would it have been two Hours? that, certainly, is the very utmoſt. Hitherto, indeed, the Generals, and their Advocates, have been pleaſed to calculate the intermediate neceſſary Time between landing the Detachments, from what would have happened on the turbulent and tempeſtous Night of the 28th, when the Sea run ſo peculiarly high, that the ableſt Seamen differed whether they could reach the Land or not: Even then it would have been done in five or ſix Hours, or not at all. It is moſt evident, therefore, that in the

the Courſe of a Night, between dark and light, the whole Body of Troops on board the Fleet might have been aſſembled on a dry, ſandy, firm Beech, under the Protection of Bomb-Ketches, which would have cleared the Ground for a Mile beyond them : Why then was not this done in the Nights either of the 24th, 25th, 26th, or 27th, during which Time there is no Appearance that the Surf of the Sea would have given any Obſtruction.

I may be miſtaken in Terms; I am neither Soldier nor Sailor ; I pretend only to ſuch Knowledge as flows from common Senſe and common Reaſon.

As to the great Difficulties ariſing from the *Poſſibility* of a Wind ſetting in from the Bay, which for ſix Weeks together might prevent a Communication with the Ships, I muſt be excuſed if I lay little Streſs upon it; becauſe, tho' this is ſet forth with all due Magnificence, when it is to juſtify the Generals in the Non-Obedience of their Orders, and when they did not chuſe to land ; yet neither this, nor the Terror of Armies behind the Sand-Hills, had the leaſt Influence, when they found themſelves diſpoſed to leave the Coaſt with the Glory of having taken Fort *Fouras*, yet the Difficulties were then greater thro' the

tempeſtuous

tempeſtuous Weather. You do well to ſay, that in this the Generals did too much, and it was an *Imprudence*. They did indeed. They did infinitely too little for their Country, but they did infinitely too much for their own Juſtification. When their Duty, the Execution of their Orders, the Honour and Intereſt of their Country, call upon them to act, Difficulties are raiſed as high as Mountains, but they ſink inſtantly to Mole-Hills, or, what is as ridiculous, to Sand-Hills, the Moment it becomes a Conſideration, whether it would not be ſafer for the Generals to do ſomething which might allay the national Clamour againſt them.

Let us now conſider how far they are juſtified, by what they found, in determining, in Contradiction to what they were ordered, that an Attack upon *Rochefort* was not to be attempted. In the firſt Place, I ſhall take Leave to ſtrip them of that Part of their Defence, which ariſes totally from their own Miſconduct, the Want of having a Place of Retreat. When we are to judge from Events of the Practicability of a Meaſure, we are to argue from the Caſe, as it would have ſtood, if all had been done which could have been done. *Fouras* might have been had for a Place

of

of Retreat ; and it is but an unfortunate Slip in the General, who owns, *Enq.* p. 28, That had Fort *Fouras* been taken, *there would have been great Eaſe in the reſt of the Enterpriſe*; I ſhall take the Liberty, therefore, to conſider the Army as landed, and the Stores, *&c.* ſecured within the Walls of that Fort.

I ſhall likewiſe take Leave to ſtrip them of that Part of their Defence, which ariſes from, (I think, a Sort of Prevarication, but certainly) a Miſrepreſentation of the Words of their Inſtructions. They are eternally telling us of the great Change between the State of Affairs in which they were to act, and the State in which they were ſent out, ariſing from Delays of various Kinds, by which an Alarm was ſpread, and the Poſſibility of a *Surpriſe* was prevented, and they were to act only by Way of Surpriſe. Who told them ſo ? Their Inſtructions, I am ſure, held no ſuch Language. *To attack, and by a vigorous Impreſſion, force*, Enq. p. 78. Theſe were the Inſtructions. If I order a Man to force into a Place, does it imply, that if he can't ſteal into it, he need not attempt it. He may try that Method firſt, if he pleaſes. It is ſafer for himſelf ; but if he can't do that, is he to decline every other Attempt ? Where, then, is the Force which he is to uſe ?

If

If the Inſtructions, therefore, convey no ſuch Ideas as confine the Operations of the Troops to a Surpriſe only, is there any Thing in the Hints of Advice given by Sir *John Ligonier*, whoſe Opinions, founded on ſuch conſummate Experience, the General in Chief thought would be a Juſtification to any Officer. Read the Paper as it ſtands together, *Enq.* p. 20th, 21ſt, 22d. He ſays, indeed, that it would perhaps be *beſt*, if the Enemy *could be* ſurpriſed ; but *a bold Attack, after having ſecured a Place of Retreat, ſecured Guides on the Spot, and thoroughly reconnoitred, and fixed upon the fitteſt Places*, is what is recommended and enlarged upon. But the Generals, it ſeems, did not ſecure the Place of Retreat becauſe they would not attack; and they did not attack, becauſe they had not ſecured a Place of Retreat. As to the other Meaſures adviſed, the getting Guides on the Spot, reconnoitring, and trying to find out fit Places to attack, all theſe they omitted, for they never were on the Spot. Of all the Hints, therefore, given by that conſummate General, Sir *John Ligonier*, not one was carried into Execution,

As to the State of the *French* Troops which were at *Rochefort*, I have already conſidered that Point, and therefore need add little

little to it now. The utmoſt which the Generals pretend to have imagined, amounts to no more than this : Sir *John Mordaunt* ſuppoſes, p. 27, that there muſt have been *a good Garriſon*, beſides, Workmen in the Docks, and the Crews of the Ships in the River. General *Conway*, p. 39, *from general Reaſoning*, and from Intelligence, *was perſwaded* there muſt be a conſiderable Number of Men in *Rochefort:* And General *Cornwallis* does not ſo much as mention any Difficulty to be feared from the Enemies Troops, but puts the whole on that of Landing, and the having no Retreat or Communication with the Ships ſecured. Thus, then, the Terrors, which you in your Performance endeavoured to magnify, of the great Oppoſition to be expected from the Enemies Troops not only vaniſh, but it appears, that the Generals themſelves never adopted thoſe Terrors, for they had no credible Intelligence contradicting the Accounts received at home : and one ſuppoſes only *a good Garriſon*, and the other *a conſiderable Number* of Men in *Rochefort*.

Being Maſters then of *Fouras*, and no Body of Troops then in the Field to oppoſe them, they could at leaſt have marched to reconnoitre, and inſpect, *with their own Eyes*, the Nature of the Fortifications about *Rochefort*

fort. And this they might have done without Danger to their Troops, and without the Loſs of a ſingle Soldier. Had they found, by their own Obſervation, and by incontrovertible Teſtimony, that the Fortifications of the Place ſo far and ſo totally varied, from the Accounts given of them, as to make the Succeſs, by Aſſault, impoſſible, or, in a very high Degree, improbable; then, and not till then, would they have been juſtified in returning to their Ships; for then they would have performed their Orders; *They would have attempted as far as was found practicable.* But Poſterity will hardly believe that three *Engliſh* Generals, of noble Blood, high in their Maſter's Favour, and high in Reputation, who were ſent with a powerful Armada, and a Body of near 10,000 *Britiſh* Troops under their Command, upon an Enterprize of the greateſt Importance to their Country, and upon which the Eyes, not only of their Countrymen, but all *Europe*, were turned with eager Expectation, could conſent to come back again, even *without an Attempt to reconnoitre*, leaving behind them, if not their own Honour, yet certainly the Honour of their Country; becauſe, in a Council of War *held aboard their Ships*, their appeared a Contrariety of Evidence, whether the Ditch about the Town of *Rochefort*, which was ſuppoſed at their firſt

ſetting

ſetting out to be dry, was, in Reality, a dry or a wet Ditch: Yet, Party and Prejudice apart, is not this a true State of the Caſe? Suppoſing the Troops in Poſſeſſion of *Fouras*, which they might ſo eaſily have been, what other Difficulty do the Generals pretend to ſuggeſt, beſides the wet Ditch.

I have ſcarce Patience enough to argue with them upon the Probability of this Point, one way or the other; yet, as I have undertaken an irkſome Taſk, I will go through with it. Sir *John Mordaunt*, in his Narrative delivered into the Board, is very ſhort, and not very particular in the Account of what he had heard was the State of the Fortifications. The firſt Part relates to the *open* Part of the *Town, where there was Rampart for ſixty Yards in Length*; this Sir *John ſuppoſes muſt have been fortified* with an Entrenchment, as by *Thierry*'s Account, there was a Paliſade, and a Trench might be thrown up in 24 Hour's Time, to which the Ships in the River would be better Flankers than a Baſtion. But did Sir *John* go to *Rochefort*, in order to hear this Evidence from *Thierry*, and to examine his Plans? Surely he might have done that at home. Yet he does not ſuggeſt one Syllable of new Intelligence gained on this Head ſince his Arrival on the Coaſt; but ſpeaks only of his own

Suppoſitions, in which, however, he was miſtaken. The reſt of the Circumference of the Town was *generally* proved, he ſays, (but it does not appear by whom) to be ſtrong and high; but I ſhould have been glad to have ſeen the Depoſitions of thoſe Witneſſes who proved this; becauſe, when they ſpoke of the *general* Parts being ſtrong and high, it is natural to ſuppoſe they were aſked ſome few Queſtions as to thoſe *particular* Parts which were not ſtrong and high; yet I am not ſure they were aſked ſuch Queſtions; and thefore I cannot but again lament the total Suppreſſion of the Evidence given to the Council of War.

As to the State of the Ditch, two Witneſſes declared they had ſeen it full of Water, by Means of Sluices in the Town. When Sir *John* is interrogated on theſe Points, by the Board, he ſays, that there was a Contradiction in the Evidence given to the Council of War; and that ſome of the Priſoners contradicted, and ſome confirmed Col. *Clerke*'s Account.

As to the firſt Part of the Fortification, (I mean the open Parts near the River) it appears, from thence, how much the Generals were out in their Reaſoning; that the long Alarm upon the Coaſt; the particular Expectation

pectation of a Viſit in thoſe Parts; the Preſence of a Mareſchall of *France*, and the great Alertneſs, Wiſdom, and Sagacity of the People, had put every Thing into ſuch a Poſture of Defence as might defy an Attack. It appears how much better that Officer reaſoned, who ſaid, *We ſhould never take it for granted that all is done which ought to be done, even in* France. *Bonneau*, the Fiſherman, recommended to Col. *Clerke*, as a knowing, ſenſible Fellow, by Capt. *Hamilton*, General *Conway*'s Aid de Camp, aſſured him, in the Preſence of Col. *Wolfe*, and ſeveral other Perſons, that upon the 21ſt of that very Month, when our Fleet was on the Coaſt, that very Spot remained as open, and as unfortified, as it was when Col. *Clerke* firſt ſaw it in the Year 1754. *Enq.* p. 52. But this, tho' reported to the General, he would not believe; he would not believe a Fiſherman in the Affair of a Fortification, becauſe he was not an Engineer; and yet he would not believe the Engineer of the Fort of *Aix*, who ſaid the Ditch was dry, and the Town open, becauſe he was an Engineer.

It ſeems to me to be one of the moſt unhappy Omens for this Country, that the French have gained ſuch an Aſcendency over the Minds of our military People, as to be conſidered by them in the Light of ſuperior

Beings, to which our leſſer Geniuſes dare not preſume to look up. "After the ſeveral In-
"telligences we had received, ſays the Ge-
"neral, *Enq.* p. 14, that the *French* expected
"an Invaſion on this Part of the Coaſt,
"and were not alarmed, *it was impoſſible*
"*to imagine* that a Place like *Rochefort*,
"the ſecond certainly in Importance on
"the whole Coaſt, ſhould, after ſuch
"Warnings be totally neglected." And yet it was ſo totally neglected, that an Intrenchment, which might have been thrown up with Eaſe, and planted with Batteries, to defend *an open Entrance into the Town, ſixty Yards wide*, was not thrown up, even after our Ships had been on that very Coaſt. But how aſtoniſhed will our Generals be when they are told that this is not the firſt Time that there has been this Neglect at *Rochefort*. There has been no Alteration in the Fortifications of that Place theſe 70 Years.

The *French* conſidered it as an open Town, ſo ſaid the Engineer of *Aix* to Colonel *Clarke*. And yet the Expedition againſt *Port l' Orient*, might have alarmed the *French* for *Rochefort* ſo far, at leaſt, as to throw an Entrenchment round it, if that would have been ſufficient to ſecure it againſt an Aſſault. It may be, and indeed it was aſtoniſhing to think

think, that a Place ſo important as *Rochefort* ſhould have been no better ſecured. But for what a Length of Time did the principal Dock-yards of *England* lay expoſed not only to be deſtroyed by a great Force, but to be burnt by the Crews of two, or three Privateers. But there are Blunders and Overſights in all Governments, for which a prudent and active Adverſary lies in Wait to take his Advantage. For the future the *French* will take Care of *Rochefort*: Our Overſights we are unhappily taught to correct, by ſevere Loſſes, while the *French* are taught to correct their Blunders by our ſuperior Blunders.

As to the Ditch, if the concurrent Evidence of Colonel *Clarke*, and the *French* Engineer, that it was a dry one, had been out of the Queſtion, the contradictory Evidence given before the Council of War, might have been cleared up from the very Situation of the Place: It was a Maxim of one of the greateſt *French* Generals, and a *French* Maxim will have Weight with our *Engliſh* Generals, that one ſhould never ſuppoſe a Ditch to be full of Water till ſome-body, we can depend upon, has dipped in his Finger and taſted it; yet that *French* General would ſcarce have taken the Trouble of ſending to ſearch if there was Water in a Ditch which lay on the Side of a

Hill.

Hill. It is impoſſible without Sluices, which muſt be repeated as often as the Level of the Ground varies, *Cela ne pourroit etre a cauſe de l'inégalité du terrein*, was what might have occurred to an *Engliſh* General, as well as to a *French* Engineer. Even if there had been Sluices, to demoliſh them was not the Work of a Battering Train. A Couple of Field Pieces would blow up a Sluice in Half an Hour, and then where would be the wet Ditch.

I have heard too another Thing, and I am well founded in aſſerting it. There was a certain Monſieur *Bonneville*, a Voluntier, who went under the Protection of one of our Generals in this Expedition. He had been about Eight or Nine Years ſince thro' *Rochfort*, and great Streſs was laid in the Council of War on the Evidence that he gave, that *to the beſt of his Recollection*, there was then Water in the Ditch; This Evidence, tho' from ſuch long Memory, was eagerly caught at; but a very deaf Ear was turned to the Undertaking, with which he accompanied his Evidence, that *even tho' there ſhould be Water, he would, by a Method which he explained, make that Ditch practicable in Two or Three different Places in the Space of a few Minutes, and wide enough for a Battalion to march in Front. That the Materials*

rials for this were in their Power, and that the Thing was no chimerical Project, ſince it had been done by Marſhal Lowendhal *the laſt War in Two ſeveral Inſtances, where he himſelf was preſent and in Service.* But this it ſeems was too dangerous.

Whoever is acquainted with the Characters of the Generals, concerned in this Expedition, will acquit them of the Imputation of perſonal Cowardice ; Far be it from me to impute it ; I declare I would not attempt to inſinuate it ; they have never indeed commanded before, but they have ſerved, and ſerved with Spirit and Gallantry ; their Conduct therefore, on this Occaſion, is more myſterious and aſtoniſhing. Of the whole which was their peculiar Department, have they, or did they attempt to execute a ſingle Part ? The Fort of *Aix* was taken, not by the Troops, but by Captain *Howe* ; if the Fleet would have taken *Fouras* likewiſe they were at full Liberty to do it, and if they could have ſailed up to *Rochfort*, and have taken that too, it does not appear that the Generals would have oppoſed it. But neither does it appear that they would have riſqu'd their Soldiers even from *Fouras*, for if they once got out of the Ships, who can tell whether they could get back again. Is it not aſtoniſhing that when Vice-Admiral *Knowles* had

reported

reported the Impracticability of taking it by Sea; the Generals ſhould firſt lay aſide all Thoughts of proſecuting the whole Plan, before they ever aſked whether this *neceſſary* Place could be taken *without* the Aſſiſtance of Ships. When they came to reconnoitre they found how practicable it was, ſo practicable, ſo little hazardous, that they reſolved to attack it meerly *for the Sake of employing the Soldiers, Enq.* p. 109. without intending to draw any other Effect from it.

It is no Fault in a General to be cautious how he expoſes his Troops; it is his Duty not expoſe them wantonly and raſhly: But Troops muſt ſerve when the Occaſions of the State demand it, and ſometimes they muſt go upon hard Service: The Queſtion was not whether *Rochefort* could be taken without Loſs; but whether *Rochefort* could be taken. A Ditch, even a wet one, a Wall, an Intrenchment, or a Battery of Cannon do not make the Places they defend impregnable. They are taken every Day, and taken by Eſcalade and Aſſault. Mareſchal *Lowendahl* took, by Aſſault, ſeveral Fortifications, ſurrounded by wet Ditches, laſt War; yet not by Surpriſe. Fort St. *Philip* was taken by Aſſault, without a Breach, tho defended by a ſtronger Garriſon than was within the Ram-

parts

parts of *Rochefort*: If it had not been ſo taken, it never could have been taken; and yet that Attack was much more deſperate, than there was any Appearance to ſuſpect that on *Rochefort* would have been. Are not Entrenchments, even the ſtrongeſt, and beſt defended, continually forced? and did not the *French*, in the only Stop they received in the Dominions of *Hanover*, march up a ſteep Hill, into the Mouths of a Battery of Cannon, and take it? All theſe Services muſt be performed, and they can be performed, but ſtill, (I agree) with Loſs. It would be happy if we could carry on War without ſhedding Chriſtian Blood; but Mankind is not yet ſufficiently civilized to adopt ſuch Methods. "In all doubtful, dangerous mi-
"litary Attempts, the Advantages, that may
"accrue from Succeſs, ought to be weighed
"againſt the Damage and Misfortunes which
"may be the Conſequences of a Repulſe."
So ſays Sir *John Ligonier*, *Enq.* p. 21. in his Advice to Sir *John Mordaunt*. Our forcing, by a vigorous Impreſſion, *Rochefort*, and ſeizing the Ships and Naval Stores, burning the Docks, deſtroying the Foundery and Cannon, and thereby crippling the *French* Navy, perhaps for the reſt of this War, were ſuch Advantages as this Country, in its preſent Circumſtances, might, in Prudence, pur-

chaſe, even with the Lives of ſome of its Soldiers, and might thereby have ſaved the Lives of many of its Subjects.

In p. 41. of your own Work, you are pleaſed to repreſent the Reſolution to land, on the 28th, for the Attack of *Fort Fouras*, as *an Exceſs of Zeal to carry on the Enterpriſe, and a Perſeverance in a Plan which was found impracticable:* But you have forgot that the Generals themſelves claim no ſuch Merit, nor do they even pretend that this was attempted with a View ſtill to proceed againſt *Rochefort*; Quite the contrary. The General himſelf, *Enq.* p. 109. repreſents it as ſomething to employ the Troops before they went Home, while the Fortifications of *Aix* was blowing up, but being prevented from landing that Night, and the Fleet being ready the next Morning, they did not think it worth while to ſtay another Day. They were ſo determined by the contradictory Evidence given at the Council of War, and ſo fixed in their Reſolution, in no Situation to attack *Rochefort*, that it was not worth while to detain the Fleet *a Day*, in order to take a Place, which if the Seamen had taken at firſt, the General ſays the reſt of *the Enterpriſe would have been eaſy*, and from whence they might, with Safety, have informed their own Eyes of the exact Situation of the Town.

You

You are pleaſed to expreſs an high Contempt of the *Idea* of giving any Blow to *France*, not only in any Part of the Land Frontiers, but of that immenſe Tract of Land which ſpreads for ſo great an Extent through different Seas, and you ſhelter yourſelf under one Axiom of *Schomberg*, "That "attacking *France* in *France*, was taking a "Bull by the Horns." And another of the Great *Victor Amadeus* of *Savoy*, "That he "knew a thouſand Ways into *France*, but "none out of it."

This is another Inſtance of what I have before lamented, as an unhappy Omen to this Country, that even great Stateſmen can adopt the Maxim, that the Wiſdom and Power of *France* renders her invulnerable. Yet I did not expect that you, of all Men living, would have endeavoured to expoſe the Abſurdity of taking the Bull by the Horns; you who have been, who continue to be the grand Advocate for Land-Operations, and for ſending the Force of this Iſland upon the Continent. I will agree, indeed, that neither in the laſt War, nor perhaps in the preſent, was there much Probability that our Troops ſhould enter *France*. So much the worſe for us.

But do you make no Difference betwen attacking ſuch a Barrier as *France* has towards *Flanders*, or even attacking it from the Side of *Italy*, and the ſending a ſuperior Fleet to ſtorm at once a Place ſituated on the Coaſt which the Generals were not inſtructed *to hold and maintain*, but to deſtroy, and then go on board their Ships? The Way back, if the Fleet continued ſuperior, was juſt as eaſy as the Way thither.

But tho' I differ from you in that Opinion, we agree exactly in another, which you advance; I mean the great Importance of *Cape Breton*, and the Blow which *France* would receive in the Loſs of it; yet if, as you obſerve juſtly, it would not *now be a Folly to be ſurpriſed at any Thing*, I ſhould have been a little ſurpriſed to hear the Neglect of that Object charged as an Imputation on the Miniſter, whom you and *yours* have ſo often ridiculed, as *America*-mad. Muſt I really aſk the Queſtion? Was that great Object forgot? Has the War in *America* in general, or a Plan of Attack on that Place in particular, been neglected by him; or was it his Scramble for Power? Was it his Junto, or his Party Cabal that ſuſpended or weakened the Operation? Look back a few Months. When was the Attack of that Place projected? And

when

when was the Armament fitted out and prepared for the Execution? Was it not in that very Hour when you and yours were with ſo much Decency and Humanity ridiculing a Bed-ridden Miniſter, and repreſenting him to be as impotent in his mental Faculties as he was in his bodily State? Was not that Armament prepared by the then Board of Admiralty, with an Expedition that ſhewed they were no Strangers to Buſineſs, how much ſoever they might be ridiculed as Novices in Office? Was it not ready to ſail Six Weeks ſooner than any Armament could be ſent from the Ports of *France*, notwithſtanding the utmoſt Exertions of that wiſe and alert People? Was it not ſufficient for the Service, and infinitely ſuperior to any Thing which at that Time could oppoſe it in *America?* When by a Series of adverſe Winds, the Departure of that Armament had been delayed ſo many Weeks, and till the *French* Fleets were ready to put to Sea, was there not a Reinforcement of Six Capital Ships *ordered* by that Admiralty, to be added to thoſe originally deſtined to that Service, and which were to follow them as ſoon as poſſible? I affirm that there was. How that Reinforcement came to be applied to other Purpoſes, you beſt can tell, ſince it was thro' your Scramble for Power, thro' your Junto, thro' your Party Cabal, that a Diſmiſſion was

given

given in that critical Conjuncture to that Board of Admiralty, and the Miniſter with whom it was connected. The ſucceeding Board happened to be of a different Opinion from the preceding one, and the Reinforcement deſtined for the Attack of *Louisbourg* was (I do not ſay perverted but) converted to other Purpoſes. To *Cruiſe upon the Trade of* France, was, by that Board, thought the beſt Method of deſtroying the Enemy, and inſtead of a Chimerical Attack upon *Louisbourg* or *Rochefort*, the Fleet of *England* was immediately exerted in what the *French* call the piratical Kind of War: A Kind of War, which I ſuppoſe, is the fitteſt for the Fleet of *England*, becauſe the *French* ridicule it the moſt; and ſure I am, that our maritime Officers not only applaud it the moſt, but ſeem of late Years to have turned their Thoughts to little elſe.

As ſoon as the ſix Week's Admiralty retired, and gave way to the preſent Board, and the preſent Miniſter was ordered to reſume the Functions of that Office, which not a Man in *England* dared to fill after him, the *American* Syſtem reſumed its Vigour. Such Ships as could be collected, tho' not equal, either in Strength or Numbers, to what had been originally deſtined to that Service, were immediately ſent to reinforce thoſe at *Halifax*; and

I do again affirm, and am prepared to prove, that, except a very ſhort Time, in which the Squadron of Mr. *Holbourne* was, by the beforementioned Accidents, by a ſingle Ship, perhaps, inferior to the *French*, he had under his Command, during the whole Summer, a Fleet ſuperior to any Thing the *French* had at *Louiſbourg*, or could, by any Means whatever, bring there, whether you conſider the Number of Line of Battle Ships, the Number of Men on board, the Number of Guns, or the Weight of their Metal; and yet almoſt the whole Maritime Force of *France*, ſo far as it could be manned, was, by Stratagem, collected there. Was it then ſo very abſurd and romantic, that when their Maritime Force was drawn away to *America*, and their Land Forces engaged in *Germany*, the reſerved Strength of this Country ſhould be exerted in attempting a Blow ſo very deciſive, as the taking of *Rochefort* would have been? Why it miſcarried, to this Moment, I can hardly gueſs; but ſure I am, it was not thro' the Impracticability of it.

I have now, Sir, gone through the Conſideration of your whole Performance, and if you are not tired with reading, I confeſs I am heartily tired with writing. I have endeavoured to keep as cloſe as poſſible to the Subject,

and

and, tho' often tempted, I have indulged few Sallies of my Pen; If now and then you ſhould have found a little Deviation, a little Playfulneſs of Imagination, forgive it. 'Tis but a Copy of my Countenance; 'tis but a forced Smile that covers a bleeding Heart: A Heart broken and bleeding for the Diſtreſs, for the Diſgrace of this Country. Where, alas! can we look, whither can we direct our Hopes. Under which of thoſe dark Clouds that ſurround, and ſeem ready to burſt upon us, can we flatter ourſelves there is a Ray of Light that will break forth? To what Purpoſe is it that we boaſt our Trade, our Wealth, and our Credit? We are but ſo many Sheep, whoſe Carcaſes tempt the Wolves to devour us. Where is the Glory of the *Britiſh* Name; where are the Terrors that uſed to accompany our Fleets and Armies? The Treaſures of the Country are poured forth in vain by an united and willing People. Our Enemies are become invulnerable, and every Blow our Miniſters meditate, Impracticable. In *Germany* their Ravages are not ſtopped for a ſingle Hour, for there were not ſo many Men in the *German* as in the *French* Army, therefore to check their Progreſs is Impracticable. In *America*, where our Troops are at leaſt double to thoſe of the Enemy, to check their Progreſs is equally Impracticable.

To

To deſtroy their Docks at *Rochefort*, a Town conſidered in *France* as an open Town, without Baſtions, without Fortfications, without a Wall for its Defence, is Impracticable; for 'tis moſt certain there was a Ditch, and ſomebody ſaid there was Water in it.

Such is the Sum total of the preſent Account of our military Operations, and can we look forward with a better Proſpect? As to our Fleet, we have indeed been our own Undoers, and have killed the pampered Child with Kindneſs. We have deſtroyed the Principle which was the Source of our Glory. We have miſguided the Ambition of our Seamen; we have tempted them with Wealth inſtead of Reputation; and we have ſubſtituted Avarice to Honour. We have at this Hour many who would make brave and excellent Corſairs, and I hope that in the long Liſt we have two or three good Admirals.

As to the Army, the Soldiers are ſtill brave, and, I am perſuaded, will fight, whenever their Commanders will lead them on; there is ſome Comfort in that. But what are the Commanders? Read over the Liſt of General Officers. I am ſure you will agree with me, that thoſe who were pick'd out as *choſen Men* to command the Expedition againſt

Rochefort, at that time ſtood among the firſt for Character and Reputation. From their Conduct on this Occaſion, we may judge what we are to expect for the future.

But alas! the Call, the Enthuſiaſtic Call of Glory and Honour, is heard no more among us; we are grown a ſolid and wiſe People; we have ſubſtituted Realities to Chimæras, and we ſeek after Eſſentials rather than empty, popular Applauſe. *Populus me ſibilat, at mihi Plaudo.* Who is there, in this enlightened Day, who has not Courage enough to withſtand popular Clamour? No Wonder! What does a Man get by being popular, and who is there that thinks any farther than *how he can get.* Is he a Soldier, of Family perhaps, of Rank, of P——y Connections, and foſtered in the Boſom of ſome powerful Faction. Shall ſuch a Man expoſe himſelf uncalled, uncommiſſioned by his Faction? Shall he brave Danger in order to ſerve *only* his Country, and at the ſame time, perhaps, encreaſe the Reputation of ſome abſurd, chimerical Beggar of a Miniſter, who is Fool enough to think his Country worth ſerving under the moſt unpleaſant Circumſtances, and in the moſt dangerous Conjunctures. Why ſhould he? His Faction will be powerful

enough

enough to ſecure his future Preferment: They will ſtand between him and Danger; they will reſcue him from Puniſhment; they will reſcue him from the Reſentment of his S——. They will reſcue him from every thing but DISHONOUR.

SIR,

I am yours, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

THO' I have not in the Courſe of this Letter affected a Candour more than is common to thoſe who engage in political Diſputes, yet the Reader will think it extraordinary that I have not availed myſelf of the Intelligence lately brought from *Rochelle* and *Rochefort* by the Captain of the Tranſport Veſſel, who was a Priſoner in that Country at the Time our Armament came to that Coaſt. The Truth is, I diſdained to prejudice the Mind of the Reader by a Teſtimony of that Sort, and I determined that he ſhould judge of the Conduct of the Generals in this Expedition, from the ſame Evidence on which they might be ſuppoſed to act. But as his Opinion of the Generals, and their Conduct, is by this Time formed, it is a Debt due to Truth, and to the Publick to ſay (what is already well known to moſt of the Merchants of the City of *London*) that at the Time our Fleet was at the Iſle of *Aix*, the whole Force which the Enemy had on that Coaſt conſiſted

of

POSTSCRIPT.

of a Battalion of regular Troops in the *Iſle of Rhe*, another in *Oleron*, a *Swiſs* Battalion at *Rochelle*, and one Regiment of Regulars, and one of Militia at *Rochefort*. That the *Prudente*, a *French* Ship of 74 Guns, *with all her Cannon* and Stores, &c. on Board, eſcaped our Fleet, by running up to *Rochefort*, thro' that very Channel which was not deep enough for an *Engliſh* Long-boat, and that the Conſternation on the Coaſt was not to be expreſſed, it being underſtood that in the Courſe of a few Days, both *Rochefort* and *Rochelle* would neceſſarily fall into the Hands of the *Engliſh*, there being no Poſſibility to reinforce them 'till the Houſhold Troops could arrive from *Verſailles*,

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